extent confirmed by M. Variot, who made a communication to the Société de Biologie on June 29. The patients chosen were debilitated men, aged fifty-four, fifty-six, and sixty-eight years respectively, and they were not informed of the nature of the treatment adopted. In all three cases the injections were followed by general nervous excitement, increased muscular power, and stimulation and regulation of digestion. M. Brown-Séquard said that M. Variot's observations disposed of the objection that the results he had observed in himself were due to "suggestion."

THE HEREDITY OF MYOPIA. — If the opinions of various ophthalmologists concerning the heredity of myopia were recorded here, the result would be an accumulation of vastly conflicting statements. This, however, would be largely due to lack of precision in investigating the subject. Lately Dr. Motais has carefully studied both the history and course of disease in 330 cases of myopia occurring in young people, and has arrived at the following conclusions, which are given in *The Medical News*: 1. The hereditary influence of myopia is manifest; 2. Out of 330 cases, the families of 219 were afflicted with the same disease (this shows a percentage of 65 per cent); 3. Hereditary myopia is distinguished from acquired myopia by (*a*) its more early appearance, (*b*) its more rapid development, (*c*) its greater severity, (*d*) its being more frequently followed by other complications (in short, hereditary myopia is far more serious than the acquired form of the disease); 4. Myopia is usually transmitted from the father to the daughter (86 per cent), and from the mother to the son (79 per cent); 5. The principal conditions which favor the transmission of hereditary myopia are, (*a*) use of the eyesight under bad hygienic surroundings (whether in school or at home), (*b*) Astigmatism (14 per cent), (*c*) Microsæmia (diminution of the orbital arch), 16 per cent; 6. The increase of the disease in hereditary cases was, in 6 per cent of the cases, found to be mainly the fault of those who had charge of the child's education. If care is not taken, acquired myopia will not restrict itself to the individual, but may also be transmitted unto their children.

## ELECTRICAL NEWS.

WIRING OF SHIPS. — In order to avoid any disturbance of the magnetism of the compass of a vessel by the powerful currents used in electric lighting, Sir William Thomson recommends the exclusive employment of a two-wire system, the positive and negative mains being not far apart save in those cases, of rare occurrence at present, in which alternating currents are employed. A galvanometer of simple construction should also be made use of, for the purpose of ascertaining that the outgoing and return currents are of the same strength, or, in other words, that no leakage is occurring. Further, the magnetic leakage from the dynamo should not be sufficient to cause any appreciable disturbance of the compass-needle, which may be tested by observing this needle at the moments of starting and stopping the dynamo. In opposition to Sir William, says *Engineering*, Mr. Alexander Siemens, whose firm have fitted up a large number of vessels with the electric light, has not found any special precautions necessary, the single-wire system being employed in every case. As for the dynamo, he has never found any disturbance from this cause, provided that there was a distance of fifty feet between the dynamo and the binnacle.

## BOOK-REVIEWS.

*Autobiography of Friedrich Froebel.* Tr. by EMILIE MICHAELIS and H. KEATLEY MOORE. Syracuse, C. W. Bardeen. 12°. $1.50.

THE bulk of this volume consists of a letter from Froebel to the Duke of Meiningen, to which is added an extract from another of his letters, and several notes by the translators. The letter to the duke relates to the early part of the author's life, from his birth to the establishment of his school at Keilhau, where his system of education, since known as the kindergarten system, was first definitely carried into practice. The letter to the duke of Meiningen is unfinished, and whether it was ever delivered to the duke at all is uncertain. But, however that may be, the letter gives a full account, not only of the writer's early life and education, but also of his theory of education in general. His practical method, unfortunately, receives but scant mention; and, if we had no other sources of information than this book contains, we should be at a loss to know what his improvements in education really were. His theories however, and the pantheistic philosophy on which they are based, are expounded superabundantly, page after page being filled with what is little better than vapor. He is forever talking about the "unity and inner connection" of things, "the inner law and order embracing all things." Whenever he studied any subject, he always sought for this "inner connection," and he complains of Pestalozzi's school, which he visited, as lacking in inner harmony and unity. Precisely what he meant by these phrases it is sometimes difficult to ascertain; but they are repeated till the reader is weary of them. He had, as even his translators admit, an absurdly exaggerated sense of the importance of his educational methods. He seems to have thought that the wisdom of ages and the accumulated experience of mankind were worthless, and declared that he wanted "the exact opposite of what now serves as educational method and as teaching-system in general." Indeed, he seems to have thought that he was going to revolutionize the culture and life of humanity, whereas all he has accomplished is some slight improvements in the education of children. Of his ardent devotion and spirit of sacrifice for the good of others, this book bears abundant evidence. He was often in pecuniary difficulties, yet, amid them all, he steadfastly pursued his course after he had once learned his true vocation as an educator. It is to be regretted that the translators have not given a fuller account of Froebel's more elaborate experiments in teaching, to which he really owes his influence and fame, and which are scarcely touched upon in his autobiographical letter. As it is, we get from this book an interesting account of his early life, and of his theories and aspirations, but very little information as to the inception and introduction of those practical methods in which his real life-work consisted. However, we must be thankful to the translators for giving us the autobiography in English, and, as they themselves remark, wait till some adequate biography appears for the fuller information we desire.

## AMONG THE PUBLISHERS.

"THE Life of Harriet Beecher Stowe," by her son, Rev. Charles E. Stowe, is now passing through the Riverside Press, and will be given to the public early in the autumn. It will be a book of peculiar personal and literary interest, and will appeal to a host of readers on both sides of the Atlantic. It is to be a handsome volume, embellished with fine portraits and other illustrations, and will be sold by Houghton, Mifflin, & Co. by subscriptions.

— Messrs. Ginn & Co. announce for publication in August "Myers's General History," by P. V. N. Myers, president of Belmont College. This book is based upon the author's "Ancient History" and "Mediæval and Modern History," and is characterized by the same qualities as mark the earlier works. It is believed that the difficult task which the author set for himself, of compressing the fourteen hundred or more pages comprising the two text-books mentioned into a single volume of about seven hundred pages, has been accomplished without impairment either of the interest or of the easy flow of the narration. The greatest care has been taken to verify every statement, and to give the latest results of discovery and criticism. The book is provided with between twenty and thirty colored maps, besides nearly two hundred sketch-maps, woodcuts, and photogravures. The illustrations have been drawn from the most authentic sources, and nothing has been admitted save what is illustrative and truthful.

— Sampson Low & Co. have published a work entitled "Englishmen in the French Revolution," by Mr. J. G. Alger, which is based upon much personal research among unpublished documents both at the Record Office and in Paris. Besides incorporating two articles that originally appeared in the *Edinburgh Review*, dealing with the early days of the Revolution and the Terror, chapters are added about the prisoners of war, the opening of Paris by the peace of Amiens, and the subsequent imprisonment